

**New Program Proposal  
Master of Arts in Early Childhood Education  
Winthrop University**

**Summary**

Winthrop University requests approval to offer a program leading to the Master of Arts degree in Early Childhood Education, to be implemented in January 2009.

The Board of Trustees approved the proposal on February 22, 2008. It was submitted to the Commission on February 29, 2008 and reviewed and approved unanimously by the Advisory Committee on Academic Programs on March 20, 2008, without substantive comment.

According to the proposal, the purpose of the program is to prepare highly qualified teachers to enter PK-3 classrooms. This program will be “accelerated” (i.e., permit students to complete requirements in 16 months as opposed to two years) to meet the needs of working adults better and to provide career-changers with the opportunity to obtain a teaching certificate in the most time-efficient manner. The need for the program, according to the proposal, is based on the demand for graduates prepared in Early Childhood Education. Early Childhood was categorized as an area of “critical need” by the South Carolina State Department of Education in 2007. (Staff research has indicated that Early Childhood is not identified as a critical need for the PACE program, but has been identified as a critical subject area for the South Carolina Teacher Loan Program.) According to the proposal, local districts have indicated a growing need for more Early Childhood Education teachers. For example, districts such as Fort Mill and Clover school districts are experiencing tremendous growth in school populations with new schools being opened each year. In addition, there is an increased interest in full-day programs for four-year-olds in the region served by Winthrop University.

The curriculum of the proposed program consists of a minimum of 44 credit hours of graduate coursework in education and field experiences. Five new courses will be added to the catalog of the institution. Winthrop University proposes to add one new faculty member (1 FTE) with an Early Childhood Education doctorate with appropriate supervisory skills to assist with the teaching of these courses.

Similar MAT Early Childhood Education programs in public institutions are found at three public institutions (College of Charleston, South Carolina State University, USC-Columbia) and two private institutions (Columbia International

University, Furman University). Early Childhood programs at the baccalaureate level are offered by 11 public institutions and 14 private institutions in South Carolina.

Enrollment in the proposed degree program is estimated to begin at 20 headcount students (20 FTE) in Spring 2009 and increase by 20 students each subsequent year with a total of 40 headcount students (40 FTE) by the second through fifth years of the program. According to the proposal, Winthrop University does not anticipate enrollment from students currently enrolled in other graduate programs because of the cohort design of the program. If the enrollment projections are met, the program will meet the current CHE program productivity standards.

The School of Education currently has two faculty with expertise in Early Childhood Education and seven faculty with expertise in education. There will be one new faculty member (1.0 FTE) required in the second year. The program will require by the end of the fifth year 10 faculty (3.5 FTE). New faculty will typically hold a doctorate in Early Childhood Education with appropriate supervisory skills. The program will also require one administrator (0.10 FTE) and two support staff (0.05 FTE).

The proposed program will be subject to accreditation by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Additionally, the program will have to demonstrate to State Department of Education officials discipline-specific objectives as articulated in the South Carolina Curriculum Standards and South Carolina's ADEPT program. All students completing the Early Childhood Education program must be certified by the South Carolina State Department of Education, pass the appropriate Praxis II examinations, and undergo an FBI fingerprint review.

No additional physical plant or equipment requirements exist for the proposed programs in Early Childhood Education within the first five years of implementation. The proposed program will require the purchase of Early Childhood collections in the library and supplies and materials. The Ida Jane Dacus Library provides print and electronic resources, including the statewide PASCAL databases, Interlibrary Loan, Internet access, bibliographic instruction, and a variety of class-specific user education programs.

Nevertheless, preliminary searches indicate that the monograph and periodicals to support Early Childhood need strengthening. Total needs for new library materials for this proposed program will be \$6,000 the first year and \$3,000 per year for each of the second through five years of implementation.

Students are allowed to transfer nine graduate hours (up to 12 hours with dean's approval) from another institution into a graduate program based on policy at Winthrop University.

New costs for the program are estimated to begin at \$87,000 in year one and include faculty salaries (\$67,000); supplies and materials (\$2000); library resources (\$6,000); printing and copying (\$3,000); and intern supervision and travel (\$9,000). Estimated new costs decrease to \$83,000 in the second year, increase to \$85,000 the third year, \$87,213 the fourth year and \$89,400 the fifth year. The total estimated new costs for the program for its first five years will total \$431,613. No "unique cost" or other special state appropriations will be required or requested.

Shown below are the estimated Mission Resource Requirement (MRR) costs to the State and new costs not funded through the MRR but which are associated with implementation of the proposed program for its first five years. Also shown are estimated revenues projected under the MRR and the Resource Allocation Plan as well as student tuition.

Estimated MRR Cost for Proposed Program	Extraordinary (Non-MRR) Costs for Proposed Program	Total Costs	State Appropriation	Tuition	Total Revenue
\$312,040	\$0	<b>\$312,040</b>	N/A	\$198,369	<b>\$198,369</b>
\$572,073	\$0	<b>\$572,073</b>	\$162,887	\$363,303	<b>\$526,190</b>
\$572,073	\$0	<b>\$572,073</b>	\$297,927	\$363,303	<b>\$661,230</b>
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These data demonstrate that if Winthrop University can meet the projected student enrollments and contain costs as they are shown in the proposal, the program will be able to cover new costs with revenues it generates by the third year of its implementation.

In summary, Winthrop University seeks approval to offer a program leading to the Master of Arts in Teaching in Early Childhood Education. This program is needed in South Carolina as indicated by placement of Early Childhood Education on a list of “critical needs” areas of teaching by the South Carolina State Department of Education for the South Carolina Teacher Loan Program. It will allow working adults and career-changers to obtain in an accelerated time frame the special skill sets required for Early Childhood Education teachers. The proposed program at Winthrop University will contribute to the placement of “highly qualified” Early Childhood teachers and contribute to increased effectiveness of South Carolina schools.

### **Recommendation**

The staff recommends that the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing commend favorably to the Commission the program leading to a Master of Arts in Teaching degree in Early Childhood Education at Winthrop University, to be implemented in January 2009, provided that no “unique cost” or other special state funding be required or requested and provided further that the program be approved by the State Board of Education prior to implementation and that the program seek appropriate accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).